



June 2003

2004 Master Plan Student Transfer

At the April 23 Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) meeting, staff presented a discussion paper on student transfer. Key topics included access, efficiency, and a new Bachelor's of Applied Science degree. In addition, the Board asked staff to collect the institutions' transfer guides for students.

Highlights from the April 23 Board Meeting

Following are highlights from the discussion paper and Board discussion on student transfer at the April 23 Board meeting.

A. Transfer Student Access

- Nearly 13,000 students transferred from Washington community colleges to public and private four-year colleges and universities in 2001-2002.
- By 2010, this number is expected to grow to approximately 17,000 students – an increase of 4,000 students.
- Washington's public colleges and universities are facing budget cuts and growing enrollment demand, which could result in access problems for transfer students.
- Options that could be used to address access issues include: (1) rationing, (2) increasing supply, and (3) funding upper-division enrollment at a higher rate to encourage institutions to accept transfer students at the junior level.

B. Transfer Efficiency

- Freshmen graduate more efficiently than transfer students at all public institutions, when measured by the Graduation Efficiency Index.¹
- Transfer students graduate at high rates over time, especially those who transfer to a four-year institution with 90 quarter credits.
- Transfer students graduate most efficiently in social science majors, and less efficiently in math and science majors.
- The Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) Associate of Arts Degree was designed as an “all-purpose” transfer degree. It appears to work well for social science majors.
 - A DTA Associate of Science degree was recently created for science majors.
 - New DTA associate degrees are being developed for business, elementary education, and secondary education (math and science).
 - Students who complete DTA associate degrees do not undergo a course-by-course transcript evaluation; instead, the four-year institutions automatically accept two years of study and consider most, if not all, students’ general education requirements fulfilled.²
 - The DTA does not guarantee acceptance to a major.³
- A small percentage of students report problems in transfer.⁴

C. Bachelor’s of Applied Science Degree

A newly developed associate degree in Applied Science will allow students to transfer to four-year colleges and earn Bachelor’s of Applied Science degrees.⁵ Potential benefits include (1) increasing the number of students who enroll in upper-division coursework and earn bachelor’s degrees, (2) increasing the earning power of individual students, and (3) producing a more highly educated workforce.

¹ The Graduation Efficiency Index includes all types of transfer students, including those who transfer with fewer than 90 credits from four-year colleges or from two-year colleges outside the state of Washington.

² General education requirements include 15 to 20 credits each of natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

³ The DTA also does not guarantee admission to a particular institution.

⁴ Clark College and Bellevue Community College Student Surveys, 2002.

⁵ Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University and some private four-year institutions are interested in offering Bachelor’s of Applied Science degrees.

D. Transfer Guides

Students who would like to transfer from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities can consult with their college advisors and review transfer guides. At the April 23 meeting, the Board asked to review institutional transfer guides.

Different types of guides have been developed to fit the needs of different types of transfer students. Those who wish to transfer one or two courses have different planning needs than those completing (or not completing) a Direct Transfer associate degree with an interest in a specific major. Thus, course equivalency guides for each institution exist, along with more comprehensive planning information.

No universal planning guide exists that would allow students to quickly determine which courses they might need to take at *any* community college toward *any* major at *any* four-year institution. Such a guide or system is technically possible; however, it would require frequent maintenance as course requirements and titles change, and would be costly to develop.

Currently, four types of guides exist: (1) general transfer guides; (2) Direct Transfer associate degree guides; (3) course equivalency guides; and (4) major planning guides.

General Transfer Guides

Four-year public institutions offer general guides, offering advice to transfer students on topics ranging from general admission to course equivalencies. Guides for each public baccalaureate institution are located on-line and attached as Appendices A through F.

- Central Washington University: <http://www.cwu.edu/~cwuadmis/transfer.html>
- Eastern Washington University: http://www.aa.ewu.edu/transfer_guides/
- The Evergreen State College: <http://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/transfer.htm>
- University of Washington: <http://www.washington.edu/students/uga/tr/planning/>
- Washington State University: <http://www.wsu.edu/future-students/admission/transfer-info.html>
- Western Washington University: <http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~admit/transfer.html>

Direct Transfer Associate Degree Guides

The Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) ensures that a student who completes a DTA associate degree has met specified general education requirements and can generally enter a four-year institution with junior standing. Currently, three DTA associate degrees have been developed:

- Associate of Arts: See Appendix G or <http://www.icrc.wvu.edu/guidelines/aasguidelines.html>
- Associate of Science (biological sciences, environmental/resource sciences, chemistry, geology, and earth science): See Appendix H or <http://www.icrc.wvu.edu/guidelines/assocscience1.html>
- Associate of Science (engineering, computer science, physics, and atmospheric sciences): See Appendix I or <http://www.icrc.wvu.edu/guidelines/assocscience2.html>

Other DTA associate degrees are currently being developed for business, elementary education, and secondary education (math and science).

DTA associate degrees help guide students through completion of general education requirements. A student who completes the degree will enter the baccalaureate institution with junior status but will not necessarily be prepared for admission to the major of his or her choice. The newer Associate of Science Direct Transfer degrees have a “major” focus to help students complete most of their general education requirements and some major-specific requirements prior to transfer.

Community colleges assist students through completion of a DTA by translating the requirements into their equivalent course titles at the community college. For example, Centralia College’s Direct Transfer Associate Degree for Anthropology can be found at: <http://www.centralia.ctc.edu/instruction/Program%20Guides/AnthroAA.shtml> and is attached as Appendix J.

While the DTA associate degrees provide a planning template for students entering many majors, they do not provide a perfect plan for all transfer students. For example, students who want to major in business (a DTA in progress) need to complete more business-related coursework prior to transfer than students in other majors.

In addition, about one-half of all transfer students choose not to complete a DTA. Instead, they may attend a two-year college for just one year, or even one quarter. It also is becoming more common for students to attend more than one community college prior to transferring.

Students who do not fit into a typical “DTA mold” are encouraged to consult with advising staff, and the earlier the better. If these students can decide on a major and a university, staff can

guide them toward courses that will transfer and apply toward their majors and/or general education requirements. Or, these students can consult course equivalency guides available on-line at all public four-year institutions.

Course Equivalency Guides

Course equivalency guides are matrices that crosswalk courses taken at community colleges to their equivalents at four-year institutions. Below is a sample course equivalency matrix, which translates biology courses at Bellevue Community College to equivalent courses at the University of Washington. Similar matrices for all subject areas exist on-line for all public four-year colleges.

Bellevue Community College Course	UW Equivalency	Meets UW Requirements?	Effective Date
BIOL 100 (6)	BIOL 100 (5), 1XX (1)	NW ⁶	AUT Quarter 1994
BIOL 101 (6)	BIOL 101 (5), 1XX (1)	NW	
BIOL 102 (6)	BIOL 102 (5), 1XX (1)	NW	
>BIOL 110 (5)	BIOL 100 (5)	NW	AUT Quarter 1990 thru SUM Quarter 1994
>BIOL 114 (3)	BIOL 1XX	NW	Prior to AUT Quarter 1988
BIOL 130 (5) formerly BIOL 230; now same as HOMECEC, NUTR 130	NUTR 301 (3), 1XX (2)	NW	AUT Quarter 1988

Major Planning Guides⁷

Several different types of guides exist at four-year public institutions to assist students in planning toward a major.

Central Washington University (CWU) and Western Washington University (WWU) have developed guidebooks for transfer students interested in particular majors. A sample from CWU's major planning guide is attached as Appendix K, and a sample from WWU's guide is attached as Appendix L. These guides are not currently available on-line but are distributed through the university admission offices.

⁶ The course meets University of Washington's Natural Science or "Natural World" general education requirements.

⁷ These guides are meant for planning purposes only. For example, Eastern's guide lists the following disclaimer: "Course equivalencies and university requirements can change without notice. The future department of the student's major should be contacted to confirm that the listed equivalencies and requirements are reflective of the current departmental standards. This information is to be used as a guide and is not intended to be substituted for the Eastern Washington University catalog."

Additional on-line major planning guides:

- Eastern Washington University: Appendix M or
http://www.aa.ewu.edu/transfer_guides/index2.html
- University of Washington (Washington Course Applicability System). Appendix N or
<http://www.washington.edu/students/uga/tr/planning/wacas/>
- Washington State University (CougarTracs): Appendix O or
http://www.it.wsu.edu/AIS/SIC/cgi-bin/dars_prospect_srvc.cgi

Eastern Washington University's guide is offered in the form of an on-line database, listing 26 different Washington and Idaho State community colleges and over 50 major areas.

Students wishing to transfer into a particular major at the University of Washington (UW) are referred through a Web site to a variety of additional sites explaining major requirements. Once a student has determined which UW courses are required for his or her major, the student can use the Washington Course Applicability System to retrieve those course equivalencies at a specific community college.

Washington State University's on-line system prints a detailed degree-planning sheet customized to courses at different community colleges. A student can use the "CougarTracs" site to enter a major of interest and a community college, and receive a customized "Degree Program Requirements Report" listing courses required for the degree and their equivalencies at the community college.

Discussion Questions for the June 12 Meeting

Transfer Access

- How is your institution planning to address access issues for transfer students?
- What can we do to address access issues for transfer students?

Transfer Efficiency

- How “efficient” should transfer be?
- What works well at your institution to promote smooth articulation for transfer students?
What could be improved?
- How should transfer student performance be assessed?

Bachelor’s of Applied Science Degree

- What benefits or drawbacks are associated with offering this degree?

Transfer Guides

- What types of guides work best for your students? What could be improved?